

HISTORY  
OF  
LINCOLN HEIGHTS BRANCH  
1900-1936

The earliest beginnings of the library in this community was the establishment of a delivery station at Daly Street and Pasadena Avenue in October 1900. This was under the direction of Miss Mary L. Jones, librarian of the Los Angeles Public Library. The policy of the library at that time was to open branches that had been petitioned for by communities wishing library service. These communities usually paid the rent for the library quarters and served the community through volunteer workers. The books were supplied from the Los Angeles Public Library. There are no statistics available for that year, but there was evidently a need for library service in this community as there was another branch started in July 1903 at 2609 East Main Street, known as the East Main Street Branch Library.

The report for that year says(ending November 30, 1904) "The East Main Street Branch was opened in July and has had an average circulation of over 1200 volumes per month"....."Both these branches are being supported by their respective neighborhoods during their probationary year, as far as incidental expenses are concerned"----"As in other branches during the experimental year, the library furnishes the books and attendant."....."There now remain but two stations, the one conducted for the Hollenbeck Home and the East Los Angeles Station. The patronage of the latter has fallen off somewhat since the East Main Branch was started, but still is large enough to warrant its continuation."

In 1905 East Main Branch circulated an average of 42 books a day and advanced the yearly circulation from 4,247 to a total of 14,202.

In 1907 Daly Street station fused with East Main Branch and became known as East Los Angeles Branch. There is an annual report for the year ending November 1907 signed by Clara S. Forst which gives the book collection as 1298 volumes with the circulation

as 10,759.

In 1908-9 there was a decided advance in the library, the annual statistics signed by Bessie M. Foye showed for the year ending June 1909 a total book count of 1,739 and the total circulation 13,137.

The 1910 statistics are vouched for by Dorothy F. Barrett and showed a growth to 1,829 books with a total circulation of 14,516.

There are no written reports for the branch during this entire period.

There is an annual report for the period ending September 30, 1910 showing that the East Los Angeles deposit station was opened (probably on North Broadway) on October 11, 1909 and circulated 17,073 books.

There evidently was another fusion, as the Central Library annual (23rd) for 1910-1911 says "The East Main Street Branch was combined with the East Los Angeles Branch in December 1910 as the latter was found to be the more desirable location and the continued growth of circulation justifies the combination. The address at this time is 2218 North Broadway. In December 1912 East Los Angeles Branch moved to larger quarters located at 2603 North Broadway.

Annual statistics for the year ending June 30, 1913 showed a circulation of 50,771 with an increase of 12% over the previous year. There is a carefully tabulated report by the librarian who was evidently of a retiring nature for she failed to reveal her name.

The Monthly Bulletin of the Los Angeles Public Library for August 1914 gives a splendid summary by Miss Helen T. Kennedy of the branch system at that time. Each branch is treated separately and the following is quoted from Miss Zita G. Bailey's report to Miss Kennedy published in that number..."The Branch Library in East, or more properly speaking, North Los Angeles, is situated on North Broadway near Daly Street, occupying one of the store rooms in the Conaty Hall building, and is reached by the South Pasadena red cars or the North Broadway yellow cars. The Griffin Avenue cars are one block north. It is one of the six branch libraries which are to

have Carnegie buildings, of which two have been erected. The site chosen on North Workman and Avenue 26 is to be paid for by assessment, levied on the property owners of this district and as soon as the title to the land has passed to the library board, work on this building, which is to cost about \$35,000, will be commenced.

The book count for the year ending June 1914 was 4,757. The reading public reached by the library extends over an area from two and one half to three and one half miles in radius, and is largely composed of people owning their own homes, who are employed in the manufacturing, mercantile and railroad sections adjacent. There is, therefore, a great need of a good collection of books on business and technology which, on account of the lack of space, we cannot hope to have until we are in the new building. The library is centrally located for doing work with the school children, being surrounded by the following schools: Avenue 19, Loretto St., Mt. Washington School, Gates School, Griffin Avenue, the Sacred Heart Convent, which is a private school, and last, but most important, the new Lincoln High School. Reference work with these schools, and with the clubs in the vicinity is very important, but under present conditions very cramped owing to lack of space, necessary books and proper assistance at rush times, which conditions, no doubt, will be remedied in the near future.

Quoted from the annual report of June 30, 1917.

Changes: The name of this branch library was changed from East Los Angeles Branch Library to North East Branch Library, and the latter name inscribed on the face of the new Carnegie Building on the southeast corner of Workman Street and Avenue 26, into which the library was moved August 28-29, 1916. The new building is a semi-circular building of brick and concrete faced with Oriental stucco, Italian renaissance in style, designed after the Villa Papa Guilia in Rome and consisting of a main floor and basement. The latter...contains an auditorium seating 340 people, furnace room, two store rooms, janitor's closet and men's toilet room. On the main floor one wing of the semi-circle contains the adult reading room and the other wing the children's room, with the charging room and receiving in the center at the entrance.

Back of the desk is the stack room, on one side of which are the office and rest rooms and on the other side the seminar room and the woman's toilet room. There is also an outside reading room (garden) with the entrance from the stack room. The building is ideally constructed for library purposes, the only drawback being its location which is a long block away from the main street.

The building was opened for the first time to the public on the afternoon of August 30, 1916, with the traveling exhibition of the California Art Club, a walking gallery talk on the pictures being given by Alma May Cook. The women of the Wednesday Morning Club, the Parent-Teacher associations and the women in the vicinity were especially invited to attend. There was a reception to the exhibiting artists and the general public in the evening.

The library auditorium was formally opened on October 5th, 1916, with Mr. Everett R. Perry presiding. An interesting program in which Mr. Charles F. Lummis, former librarian of the Los Angeles Public Library, Lincoln High School Glee Club, Mrs. M. E. Johnson, president of the Wednesday Morning Club and others took part.

Statistics for the year following were exciting and interesting. With a book collection of 7,260 books there was a circulation of 85,570, a total gain of 17% over the previous year. Cardholders jumped to 4,294. Evidently a duplicate pay collection was started in this year for there is shown "Pay duplicate receipts, \$13.55."

The years following were dimmed by the glory of the preceding one and the fact that the war began the following year. The library was put to good use this year with its extra-curricular activities as a center for the American Red Cross work for this district. We also find that food conservation and Liberty Loan drives were a part of the library's business for that period. The book collection remained almost stationary with a gain of only 74 books added to it, of which some were loans from Central and actually it showed a loss over the previous year. There was a gain in circulation of 3,409 making a total circulation for the year of 88,979. The card holders had grown to 4,569. For the year 1918-1919 Miss Bailey remained in charge and the end of the year showed a loss in circulation of 137. There was a

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fund started to purchase a piano for the library and there was \$63.45 as a nucleus. Card holders were 4,765 and the pay receipts were \$13.25.

In September of 1919 we find Miss Victoria Ellis in charge of the library. In November 1919 the name of the library was changed from North East Branch to the present one of Lincoln Heights, as the name of the district had assumed that name at the time, and the neighborhood petitioned the city council and the library board to change the name to one corresponding to the name of the district.

Free Spanish classes were begun in the auditorium on February 14, 1920 and there was an exhibit of Wendt paintings there also.

Under Miss Ellis's capable management there was a decided growth in the library. Book stock grew to 8,526 and the circulation climbed to the remarkable total of 113,675.

With the assistance of the Wednesday Morning Club and the Lincoln Heights Board of Trade, a dance was given at Odd Fellows Hall. Articles were raffled, cakes sold, and with the wherewithal of \$150 so raised added to the fund already present, a piano was purchased and presented to the library.

Community singing was started at the library in October 1919.

At this time there was an echo of war in the idea of decorating the library with flags, and the flags of France, England, Spain and Italy with a center flag of the United States were given to the library by the Kenesaw W.R.C. in June 1920.

A bas-relief of Abraham Lincoln to be executed by Mrs. William Wendt was begun for the library, this being the gift of the Auxiliary, B. of L.E.

There was a continued growth in the library for this year, books going to a total of 9,792 and circulation reaching 124,078.

In September 1921 Miss Veva Hart assumed charge, due to the promotion of Miss Ellis to principal of the Science Department at Central Library.

A community theater was started in the summer of 1920 and evidently had some degree of success due to interested people.

In 1922 Miss Hart still in charge of the library continued to gain

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some, the total book count being 10,248 and the circulation 125,428.

The children's theater opened in October 1921, and it must have faded away, for we find it being revived in May 1922.

The Lincoln bas-relief was finished and presented to the library June 9, 1922. 1923 with Miss Veva Hart still in charge showed a loss in circulation for the year of 1,246. This loss was largely fiction and magazines.

A choral society was begun in August 1922 but disbanded in January 1923.

January 1, 1924 Miss Laura E. Thompson came to take charge of Lincoln Heights with an interim of two months from October to November 1923 when Miss Hazel Burk was in charge. Book stock grew to 11,107 this year, but the circulation dwindled even more than the previous year. The loss this year was 5,011 and was all in juvenile non-fiction.

With the year 1925 things began to look up and we had a gain in circulation of 7,303, making a total for the year of 126,474. The book stock had increased to 11,534. Card holders had grown to 7,219. Lincoln Study Club organized.

The following year did not fare so well. There was a loss of 1,625 in circulation during this year, although the staff showed four senior attendants, including a foreign attendant.

There was a tendency at the time to run to surveys of the district. The annual reports show a series of surveys made outside the library on almost every phase of possible library borrower, foreign and American, adult and juvenile, in a house to house canvass of the district as well as surveys of clubs, churches, industries, etc.

The Lincoln Study Club continues to use the library and there is a revival of the theater arts in a group called the Stagecrafters. The Woodcrafters and the Knowledge Club for girls sprang into being.

The loss of this year seemed to be adult.

For the following year of 1926-27 there was an upward trend with an increase making a total for the year of 136,709, these gains being largely juvenile. Under Miss Becker's, later Mrs. Ames, regime the juvenile work gained and the adult seemed to take a new lease on life

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and responded accordingly.

The year following 1927-8 showed a gain of 3,544. The staff consisted of Miss Thompson, Mrs. Ames (Miss Becker), Mrs. Kudlicka, Miss Berggren, Mrs. Davis, Sylvia Goldberg, a half time page and a full time janitor.

There seemed to be little of historical value to record because surveys are still in the fore and there are statistics from the schools showing the influx of foreigners into the neighborhood.

The year following found much the same staff except for Miss Kudlicka who left in October 1928. The sudden growth in juvenile the year before faded into a decided loss in juvenile non-fiction due to the changing of Z books from their original classing into their own grouping. This was also true of the juvenile fiction. The branch loss was 3034 for the fiscal year 1928-29.

In February 1929 Miss Thompson's health gave out due to the strain of home cares and she was forced to resign to regain her health. Mrs. Arnoldine J. Saul replaced Miss Thompson on March 18, 1929. There had been consecutive losses for some months. An effort was made to stem the flood and it was not until the end of the year that the tide was made to flow in the opposite direction.

This year saw the establishment of a successful Spanish Club and also the addition of the Izaak Walton League. The auditorium was in a deplorably run down condition and we realized that it would have to be renovated in order to be put to any amount of good use.

A survey was made of the book collection and was found to be sadly lacking in popular titles of books. An effort was made to build this up to normal to offer bait for the coming year. There was a loss of 3,034 this year.

Mr. Perry came out to look over the needs of the branch at the request of the branch librarian and felt justified in spending a certain amount of money on repairs for the branch. The auditorium was completely overhauled and made into a really cheerful place. The small room on the right of the auditorium was made into a seminar room and is used for story telling and club room. The entire basement was put into good shape with the addition of a furnace

that really heats the building for the first time in its history. The seminar room off the fiction room was made into a work room and is a real joy to the staff. Shelves were installed for the bound files of periodicals. The staff room and office were decorated as well as the lavatory. Shelves were added to the fiction room and the permission case doors were moved from the end of the room to the rear of the desk. July and August 1929 were abominably hot months and certainly succeeded in killing the growth of the branch for that period. But with September, the opening of schools, there was a change in the service and demand. The circulation jumped for the first time in a real effort to make new heights. Things grew firmer as the fall advanced but it was not till December that it grew beyond our hopes. From that time on there was no effort to bring anything into the library pertaining to circulation. It became increasingly necessary to put forth efforts to meet the demand. March 1930 showed the largest circulation ever recorded for one month at this branch. There was an increase of more than four thousand over the same month for the previous year. The library has been the busiest place possible for the balance of the year.

The auditorium has been put to very good use during the year, being engaged sometimes as often as six days in one week. The trend at the present time is certainly an upward one.

September 1933

In 1930 the staff consisted of:

- Branch librarian - Arnoldine J. Saul
- Children's " - Pauline Ames
- First assistant - Marion Kilgore
- C.L.A. - Barbara Moore
- C.L.A. ½ time - Sylvia Goldberg
- Page " " - Richard Fowler

With the library making such rapid growth it became necessary to add to the staff and when fall came, another full time Clerical library aid, Margaret Peterrek, was added and another half-time page.

The circulation this year was 161,765 a gain of 32,554 and a borrowers registration of 8745.



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In a happy, busy year there is little to record so that for the year 1931-32 we just seemed to grow busier constantly and the branch this year showed a gain of 19,624 raising our total circulation for the year to 214,902.

July 1st Mrs. Ames transferred to Cahuenga Branch and later on Miss Kilgore (now Mrs. Clark) transferred to Sidney Lanier Branch.

Miss Marguerite Cameron replaced Mrs. Ames as Children's librarian and Miss Geneva York took Mrs. Clark's place.

It was a busy hectic year. Miss Cameron gave a teacher's tea during book week with about one hundred teachers in attendance. The children's circulation grew apace.

The business depression continued to send droves of people to libraries all over the country and Los Angeles and Lincoln Heights received their share. On January 1st, 1933 Miss Cameron resigned after a year and a half at Lincoln and was replaced by Mrs. Hilda Collins. The branch as whole continued to grow, the adult gain being 23,521 although the juvenile showed a loss. However, the branch gained 19,688 this year.

The most important event this year was the winning of the Germain trophy by the janitor for the best cared for library grounds. Mr. James Woodfork, janitor for many years at Lincoln Heights was the proud winner.

The staff at this time consisted of:

Branch librarian - Mrs. Arnoldine J. Saul  
Children's " - Mrs. Hilda Collins  
First assistant - Miss Geneva York  
C.L.A. - Miss Barbara Moore  
C.L.A. - Miss Margaret Peterek  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  time page - Miss Donna Stanley  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  time page - Paul Fisk

The death of Mrs. Arnoldine Saul, January 26, 1934 was a considerable blow both to the library and the community. Mrs. Saul had been branch librarian of the Lincoln Heights Branch since March 1929 and her knowledge of books and her personality had much to do with the success of the branch. Geneva York acted as branch librarian until February 15, 1934 when Hubert B. Frazier was transferred from the Shelf Department to fill

the vacancy.

There was a decided loss in circulation during the year 1933-34. Loss in registration, fewer copies of new titles, fewer replacements of worn-out books, fewer magazines and more people going back to work must re-act upon the circulation. The fiction percentage as compared to the total circulation was 64.21. The total circulation for the year 1933-1934 was 210,805 a loss of 23,785 when compared with the previous year.

Margaret Peterek, C.L.A. resigned December 21, 1934, and was replaced by Miriam Marsh, transferred from Benjamin Branklin Branch, February 1, 1935.

The loss in circulation continued for the year 1934-1935. The total circulation for the year was 201,244 a loss of 9,561.

Paul Fisk, half-time page, resigned September 14, 1935, and was replaced by Howard Baird.

Miriam Marsh, C.L.A. resigned December 31, 1935, and was succeeded by Isabelle Smith.

Geneva York, Librarian, was transferred to the Catalogue Department February 17, 1936. Marguerite Gray was transferred from the Foreign Department to take her place.

Donna Stanley, half-time page resigned June 15, 1936, and was succeeded by Carmella Antonacci.

The staff at the present time (June 1936) is as follows:

Hubert B. Frazier, Branch Librarian.

Hilda Collins, Children's Librarian.

Marguerite Gray, Librarian.

Barbara Moore, C.L.A.

Isabelle Smith, C.L.A.

Howard Baird, half-time page.

Carmela Antonacci, half-time page.

James Woodfork, Janitor.